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1 June 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Alleviation of overcrowding upon initial occupancy of
NSA Operations Building at Fort Meade

1. The plans for the National Security Agency Operations Building, now being constructed at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, were initiated almost five years ago. These plans had been carefully developed to provide adequate space for the operations of the Armed Forces Security Agency. Since that time, NSCID No. 9 (Revised) and NSC 166 have been issued, establishing the National Security Agency. The scope of responsibility and the operations of this successor to the Armed Forces Security Agency have been greatly increased in the fields of both COMINT and COMSEC during this five-year period.

2. The plans for the facility at Fort Meade called for gross space of 1.4 million square feet; about 1.1 million square feet were to be allocated for operational use. During development of the plans, this 1.1 million square feet of operational space was further decreased to 1.06 million square feet by the architectural necessity of increasing space allocated to such service facilities as more elevators and escalators, wider corridors, increased transformer capacity, and increased toilet facilities. Notwithstanding this reduction, the remaining usable operational space was considered ample in 1951 to accommodate the total work force and to allow for some expansion. Conditions have changed since then:

a. You recognized the need for more people in the COMINT field and authorized me to hire 1065 additional civilians.

b. The increasingly sophisticated techniques of our targets have demanded attacks by highly-complicated and space-consuming computers. I have been forced to add to our already large battery of IBM and electronic machines in order to maintain our current level of capability.

c. The development of more advanced computers, whose special application to our analytic techniques are invaluable in operations, further increased our machine holdings (with a further encroachment on our operational areas).

d. The amount of material available to our people for processing has increased with the steady implementation of the intercept

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Installation Deployment Plan. Completion of this Plan in FY-58 will increase the amount of intercept by more than 60 per cent. In order to process properly this staggering volume of traffic, I will undoubtedly require more people. This is evident from the fact that we are almost up to our currently authorized allowance and are still unable to process fully all the material we receive.

3. I consider it manifestly unwise to initiate operations at the new site under crowded conditions. This would effectively preclude any needed expansion or delay it until additions to the building could be constructed. The COMSEC production element at the Naval Security Station may be considered an entity in itself. Its separation from the staff elements at Fort Meade would not adversely affect the direction, planning, and guidance of the COMSEC effort, whereas its retention at the Naval Security Station would serve in some degree to disperse the vital COMSEC operation.

4. In view of the situation discussed above, I now plan to retain sufficient space at the Naval Security Station to accommodate the COMSEC activities which do not require collocation with NSA Headquarters for efficient operation. I have agreed to inform the Navy by 30 June 1955 of the space at the Naval Security Station which will be required by NSA and will itemize for them the buildings to be retained.

(sgd) Ralph J. Canine

cc: AG [redacted]
C/S Mr. Philip Patton
P/P OSO, OSD, Rm 3E1025,
The Pentagon
COMSEC
PROD
MGp

RALPH J. CANINE
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Director

1251

M/R:

Memo prepared at direction of DIR. Otherwise, self-explanatory. Action coordinated with and approved by COMSEC (Colonels Herrelko & Davis), PROD (Mr. James Payne), and MGp (Col Holt). M/R prepared 20 May 55 by P/P (Maj R. H. Dean, Ext 548). Rewritten by DIR-1 Jun 55.

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